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THE MANAGEMENT OF THE LIBRARY'S FINANCIAL RESOURCES WHEN IMPLEMENTING AN OPEN ENVIRONMENT

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Abstract

This paper focuses on the new challenges faced by library managers in their efforts to implement an open learning environment during a time of economic crisis. The paper is based on the experience of the Director of the Klaipeda University Library (KUL) in Lithuania during the last ten years of the library's operation. It includes a discussion of the changing picture of the university's budget development process and efforts to engage university leaders by developing a deeper understanding of the library's role in supporting changing academic programs and in the accreditation of those programs, and the contribution that the library makes to the university's standing within the higher education community. While the KU Libraries still struggled in this period for a better budget, librarians of KUL very often found themselves acting as change agents for their institution and especially as advocates of the open access movement in the university community. A part of this paper is devoted to the library's experience as a participant in Lithuanian library consortia (the Lithuanian Research Library Consortium - LMBA and the Lithuanian academic Network – LABT) and provides a description of the concrete financial benefit of this participation. The main propositions in the paper are illustrated with statistical data from KUL budget documents and the results of the latest library's user surveys.

Keywords: academic library, open access movement, library budgets, library consortia, Lithuanian Academic Library Network, Lithuanian Research Library Consortium.

INTRODUCTION

Because of the growing strategic importance of information and communication technologies in educational process and the dramatic changes that are occurring in how information is acquired, processed and used, academic libraries remain a significant unit within institutions of higher education. Faced with rapidly rising prices for monographs and printed journals, and scarce financial resources, academic libraries have to find new ways of organising their programs if they are to provide sufficient information resources and provide the services required in post-secondary education. Academic libraries have to develop new strategies to provide access to new kinds of information resources and a wider variety of media formats as they address the needs of students and faculty to meet the challenges of the new century.

Information technologies are the main driving force behind many of the changes taking place in universities in general and in academic libraries in particular. They have created an environment characterised by the demand for innovation and stronger attention to user needs while opening access to ever larger amounts of information in a wider array of formats.

These technologies have also changed the role traditionally played by academic librarians (providing research information, collecting of stock, classifying, archiving and preserving documents) and proposed new ones for them as consultants, mediators between information creators and students, suppliers of international databases and structures, assistants in publishing, and educators helping users become information literate.

These new roles all relate to the best traditions of librarianship, but they present challenges in that they require librarians to expand their expertise beyond dealing with information to include an understanding of the technology that supports that information. At the same time, librarians are being asked to work within administrative structures that do not always understand and recognize the changes in role that are taking place.

Given that the main mission of academic libraries is the meeting of informational requirements of universities and their educational and research programs, we as academic librarians must

continually develop new approaches and methods for addressing this mission in light of the changes taking place in our environment.

“Digital technologies and online information resources have brought fundamental changes in how research is done, and also in what researchers expect from library and information services. New resources, services and technologies continue to create new opportunities, new challenges and new expectations. Librarians and information services need continuing top-level support within their institutions so they can acquire the financial resources needed to ensure that they can fulfil their potential and meet these challenges” [Ensuring a bright future..., 2010, p. 3].

BACKGROUND (About the Klaipeda University and its Library).

Klaipeda University was established on January 1, 1991 building, on a foundation of a group of faculties and subdivisions of higher schools that were merged as part of the process used in forming the new university. The University's mission is to offer the kind of human education required to develop an intellectual society, to enshrine the cultural and historic heritage of Western Lithuania, and to uphold its traditions.

The mission of the University is both universal and exceptional, satisfying the demands of Lithuania as a marine state for qualified specialists capable of conducting high level fundamental and applied research while offering strong programs in the arts, humanities, social sciences, education, and business in keeping with the interests of the city and region.

A rapidly developing Klaipeda University now has around 10 000 students and 600 teaching staff, studying and working in 7 faculties (Natural Sciences and Mathematics, the Humanities, Marine Engineering, Fine Arts, Pedagogy, Social Sciences, Health Sciences), 2 study institutes (Maritime and Continuing Studies) and 5 scientific research institutes (Baltic Coastal Research and Planning, Baltic Regional History and Archaeology, Marine Landscape, Mechatronics, Regional Policy and Planning).

The foundation of the current KU Library was the resources of the libraries of faculties and the subdivisions of higher schools that were incorporated into the new university when it opened. When the university opened it had a library collection about 200 000 volumes from the Soviet era institutions housed in various parts of the city together along with some staff inherited from these libraries. In 1995, one more academic institution was incorporated into university structure, and our library's collection doubled in size to 400 000 volumes.

The responsibility of the combined library has been to integrate these collections and service points and develop a coordinated service program to support the entire university. At present, KU's Library has a collection (after constant weeding over the years that has eliminated a significant number of unusable items) of 450,154 volumes. Library's collections and services are spread across 5 locations in various places within city of Klaipeda.

THE CONCEPT OF AN OPEN ENVIRONMENT

Klaipeda University Library is only now taking its first steps towards a real open information environment for its users, so our understanding of the concept and the challenges this approach presents is not complete. As a result, this presentation will explore library activities that are being or might be implemented to improve users' access to information resources.

It is offered as one example of the modernisation story of academic libraries that are emerging in post –soviet countries.

THE MANAGEMENT AND BUDGETING OF IMPLEMENTATION AN OPEN ENVIRONMENT USED AT THE KUL

- **Modernisation of library's information system**

Opening this integrated collection to users was the main task for our young library. The first computers came to the KU Library in 1993, but the first real library modernisation program did

not start until 1998 when a Lithuanian academic library network (LABT) project started to be realised. This project was financed through 2009 as a state investment project whose main goal was to create Lithuanian's academic virtual library through the automation of libraries, unification of search and access to information sources and virtual services [Lithuanian academic library network, 2010].

The biggest benefit of this program went to the 15 state university libraries though most state college libraries gradually have been included into this network. This project guaranteed all participating libraries modest but stable financing of essential elements of the modernisation process (to include some hardware, licenses of ALEPH software for an OPAC, and money for staff training) The LABT project lasted from 1998 to 2009, and, during these years, the total sum allocated for KUL was about 63 000 Euros (around 6 000 euro/year). We opened our electronic catalogue for users in 2001, and, now in 2011, records for around 73% of our collection are loaded, making these items available to order through the internet.

In 2010 LABT network has been reorganised into a Lithuanian Academic Libraries Consortium for Sustaining and Development of Research and Studies Infrastructure (LABIIMSPP). The main reason of such reorganisation was lack of state financial resources and willingness of Lithuanian Ministry of Education and Science to transfer a part of responsibility on each educational institutions (partners of consortium) including of some co-financing consortium's tasks. The Consortium agreement has been signed by 31 Lithuanian academic institutions (state universities, colleges, research institutes and Library of Lithuanian Academy of Science).

Participation in the LABT network and now in LABIIMSPP Consortium has strong impact on all sides of KU library's activity. Parallel to implementing ALEPH system in the frame of these networks many useful discussions, seminars, workshops and trainings have been organised that have introduced KU librarians to innovations in practice and other new ideas from world library practice.

On the 30th of April, 2009, a new Law on Higher Education and Research came into effect in Lithuania, and the reform of Lithuanian higher education and research was launched. This new Law provided for the reform of legal status, management and funding of state academic institutions. When the changes required in the legal status and management of higher education establishments are fully implemented by the end of 2011, state universities and colleges will gain the right to use their real estate and their earnings as they choose.

This new Law made a great support to open access initiatives. As stated in the Law on Higher education and Research (Article 45. Transparency of research activities) "in order to ensure the quality of research conducted with funds of the state budget, the transparency of the use of funds of the state budget, to enhance scientific progress, the results of all research works carried out in state higher education and research institutions must be announced publicly (in the Internet or any other way), to the extent this is in compliance with the legal acts regulating the protection of intellectual property, commercial or state and official secrets" [Republic of Lithuania, 2009].

One of the ideas that have come to Klaipeda as a result of its ties to other Lithuanian libraries and as a result of its efforts to address this new law is The Budapest Open Access Initiative (BOAI) of 2001. It has accelerated progress internationally to make research articles in all academic fields freely available to students and researchers on the internet. The BOAI outlined two strategies: self-archiving (referred to as BOAI-I) and open-access journals (BOAI-II) [Budapest Open Access Initiative, 2002].

Both strategies have been adopted by Klaipeda University and are in use on our campus.

- **Self-archiving (BOAI-I) at the KUL**

KU Library as part of its participation in the LABT network is involved in the collective creation of such national repositories as: ETD, PDB and eLABA. The LABT project has provided strong support for the creation of these national repositories, the university libraries of Lithuania have worked hard to enrich these databases. In the period of 2003 up to 2010, the ETD repository

has added a total of 15,428 records of master's student final papers, doctoral dissertations, and dissertation summaries.

Despite much effort and strong advocacy on the part of the library to encourage participation in the ETD repository, acceptance of ETD's has failed so far to gain acceptance at KU. At present, we remain outsiders in this effort.

A database of the university's research publications (PDB) has been developing since 2002 within the framework of the LABT. This has progressed better, and, at present, the KU PDB database contains around 6 700 records, adding an additional 700 records annually.

The Lithuanian Academic e-Library (eLABA) is another national repository initiated within the framework of LABT. This data base has been developing as a pilot project for a national open access repository since 2002 and was first financed by UNESCO, with later funding coming from the EU [Streimikis, 2010]. Among the goals of eLABA are: to create the necessary environment, tools and infrastructure for the creation, collecting and provision of documents of Lithuanian research and studies. KU's publishing department along with other university publishers have been participating in the eLABA project from its beginnings as a pilot project. However, responsibility for eLABA project has now moved to librarians who are preparing in practical ways to implement the program as a full project financed by EU structural funds.

KU's librarians faced with the inertia of the traditional publishing paradigm [Johnson, 2002]. Librarians in most cases have to accommodate faculty members' needs and perceptions, demonstrating the benefit of these repositories over and over. The arguments most often used against repositories are: a fear of plagiarism, complicated archiving procedures, confusion with copyright and inconsistent quality that makes them hard to recognize as scholarship.

KU Library is ready to co-ordinate archiving process and has initiated several meetings in separate faculties talking with faculty administration and clerks of departments. However, at present, we are not satisfied with the level of KU's participation in ETD, eLABA and other national repositories.

- **Open-access journals (BOAI-II) at the KUL**

KU Library provides their users access to open access journals, linking users to externally hosted content. The library's home page promotes: *The Directory of Open Access Repositories – OpenDOAR* which includes a variety of open access resources. It also provides links to 6 Lithuanian databases and 26 in foreign languages on the library's home page.

According to statistics of Directory of open access journals (DOAJ) total 21 titles of Lithuanian journals included into directory for the beginning of 2011 [Directory of open access journals, 2011].

- **Library cooperation:**

Today, no one individual library can provide access to all of the information resources their users need. The problem of access is growing, and libraries have to accommodate the demand for information. Interlibrary co-operation is the most effective way of financing this effort and address the rapidly growing prices charged for information materials and access. Organized efforts among libraries involving networks, unions, and other consortiums of libraries are the most common forms of co-operation, and these have proven to be effective way

Besides of participation in LABT network and its successor, the LABIIMSPP Consortium, Klaipeda University Library is a member of other library unions and associations in Lithuania and abroad. KU Library was a founding member of the Lithuanian Research Library Consortium (LMBA) which began operation on 4 December 2001 [Lithuanian Research Library Consortium, 2011].

At present, this consortium unites 48 Lithuanian research libraries, offering users at member institutions access to over 37,000 e-journals and 67,000 e-books in 60 databases. Its development is documented in the table below. Participation in this consortium has expanded the research material available to our community, offering tremendous benefit to KU Library users.

Table 1. Licensed databases and spent resources at the KUL (2001-2011)

Year	Number of licensed DB at KUL	Subscribed on KU money	From other projects	DB licensed through LMBA	KUL Co-financing for LMBA licensed DB (in Euro)	Tested DB
2001	14	1		13	2 823	2
2002	14	1		13	6 275	14
2003	23	1		22	3 352	28
2004	27	2		25	2 490	14
2005	32	10	1	22	7 840	11
2006	52	9	6	37	18 586	36
2007	48	8	6	34	19 414	19
2008	36	2		34	22 247	20
2009	32	1		31	20 492	6
2010	45	2		43	5 991	24
2011	47	2		45	-	20

On July 21 of 2009 a contract between the Lithuanian Ministry of Education, the European Social Fund Agency and LMBA was signed and a project „eMoDB.LT: Electronic databases, opening up education to Lithuania" started to be realised. The project with a budget of around 9 million Euros will be implemented in three years (from 2009-07-21 to 2012-07-21). During project's time is expected to:

- educate scientists and other researchers, as well as students and librarians in the competencies of electronic scientific information resources,
- subscribe to 60 scientific electronic databases, buy five electronic archives, bibliographic references tools licenses and the software for remote access to databases of licensed content.

Librarians of KUL are active participants in e-resources trainings for researchers and librarians conducted by LMBA in 2010-2011. After the course the feedback was extremely positive with most saying that the course should be taken by all researchers and graduate students and some suggesting also by all undergraduate students.

An interactive ebook („The use of electronic scientific information resources (databases)") in Lithuanian language was created for those wishing to take the course themselves or as a refresher [Tautkevičienė G. et al, 2010]. Some of our staff participated in creation of this book.

KU Library's participation in a world's library unions such as LIBER, IAML, Bibliotheca Baltica because of shortage of money has a part-time character. Library staff is studying useful materials of various meetings of these unions online and are very happy if such material is available on open access. Hope IATUL's materials will always be available as well.

- **Changing library's design (problem of close stacks)**

Most post-soviet academic libraries are primarily closed stack libraries. Klaipeda University is not an exception. We inherited Soviet style academic library facilities where close stacks have been the norm, and even after 20 years of existence, the University has not yet built a separate library building or even been able to consolidate operations on a single university campus.

I have been working for all of these 20 years to consolidate collections and services and continue to do so, but this has not yet happened. As a result, library services are still spread among the various university faculties and institutes in portions of older buildings that were originally designed to be something other than libraries. While money is scarce for library programs, the decentralised development of libraries continues to be expensive and limits opportunities for modernization. Still, it is hard to break with tradition.

At present only one of the 9 units of the library system has opened its stacks to users. After a total renovation of its library premises, the implementation of the starting components of an RFID 3M™ security system (RFID tags, 2 pad staff work stations, detection system (1 gates) and 1 station of SelfCheck™ System) the Library of the Pedagogics faculty is ready to be opened to public. While modernising this faculty library (from 2007 up to 2010), around 260,000 Euros have been spent on renovating this facility and implementing a RFID system. Part of this money (in particular that used for the implementation of the RFID security systems) came directly from the state through the LABT. The state also funded the library's self-check machine through the LABIIMSPP Consortium. Without this external funding this modernisation could not be realised.

I consider the opening of the first really open stacks' library in our university to be an important political action. I hope after some time of using these premises and the service approach taken in the library will get stronger users' support and will assist in making the argument for more money to modernise the other library units or to build a central library for the entire university. While it is true that only one library unit has opened its stacks providing open access to its information resources, we are trying other ways to open library collection to our users. Modern technology is the most useful tool we have at present to help in this process.

- **Usage of internet and other modern communication tools**

Given that the university and its libraries are scattered about the city, our library is trying to use virtual forms of communication to interact with our users. Virtual expositions are mainly used for +description of the most attractive and important parts of the library's collection, and the library's home page is valued highly according to our latest users' survey as being the most popular of our information resources.

A year ago library started to use popular social networking tools such as Face Book and YouTube for marketing library events and initiatives and to get some feedback from users.

- **Advocating for an open environment in the university**

KU Library promotes an open access in all possible ways. Library informs university's community about all events coming on open access in Lithuania and abroad but advocating for an open learning environment library faces with some barriers.

During the last three years, the library has begun to be actively involved in the accreditation process of university's study programs. The Centre for Quality Assessment for Higher Education in Lithuania is organising external assessment of quality of pursued study programmes with the view of accreditation. During the Experts' Visits to university departments, library staff members are being invited to present a detailed analysis of the library's support for study programs as part of the evaluation process. The results have been interesting as they introduce our faculty to the standards based on practice in other European countries.

This has been useful, but I am puzzled by what I consider a strange position taken by some of these experts regarding a lack of paper journals in our collections. In some meetings, much value has been placed on these collections and the small number of paper journals collected and stored has been noted a weakness even when the content of these journals are available in full-text databases to which the library subscribes. This may just be a time of transition, but it has not been helpful as many of our faculties have already changed their perceptions on the importance of library resources for the realisation of their study programs and are looking at librarians in a new way.

Conclusion

KU and most Lithuanian academic library managers are hardly working in the environment of constant pressure of scarce financing, demand to sustain high level of services, needs of innovation and exploitation new technologies, various staffing problems and all kinds of concurrency.

As are most Lithuanian universities, KU is living transitional period as they accommodate both changes in the way information is being shared on campuses and try to conform to the model for a university favoured within the European Union.

Big changes are coming in 2011 and in the years to come in both Klaipeda University and its Libraries, and we hope to develop stronger support for open access within the new and reformed university that will result.

Meanwhile and hopefully in future library cooperation and partnership I value as the best solution to manage our libraries.

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